BAROQUE PERFORMANCE PRACTICES

by

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Music 353H

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Baroque music has been so neglected that no original tradition as to its performance has been passed down through the centuries. We must therefore try to acquire as close a resemblance as we can under modern conditions with modern notation and improved instruments. The Baroque ideal did not consist of a faithful adherence to a carefully notated text. Composers depended upon the individuality of the performer to fill out the implications of a sketchily notated text. Rigid interpretations simply do not exist; however, there are outer boundaries. There have been treatises written by Baroque composers concerning Baroque performance practices to which we can refer, but many times obvious points to the Baroque musician were left out--points not obvious to us today.

Robert Donington feels that it is of utmost importance to realize that strong feelings and playing are often appropriate in Baroque music. J. J. Quantz states that "the composer and he who performs the music must alike have a feeling soul and one capable of being moved."[1] C.P.E. Bach asks how a musician can possibly move others unless he himself is moved.

There are however many different expressions of musical feelings, and one must recognize the national differences in temperament especially between the two leading styles of Baroque music: the Italian and the French. Quantz suggests that Italian music is less restrained than any other; whereas, French music is almost too restrained. There is much Italian influence in Baroque music. The French rapidly assimilated the Italian ornaments but left little room for free ornamentation. The Germans were influenced both by Italian and French music. One needs to study Couperin's ornamentation technique to really understand what J.S. Bach wanted. C.P.E. Bach also drew on both styles, yet his treatises give us no general uniformity to follow.

Our first problem of Baroque interpretation is that there are differences in notation and convention. Many of the signs used in Baroque texts are very misleading. Certain ornaments may have a completely different meaning for us today than the meaning that the composer had intended. Many times ornaments not specified in the text were required and were automatically incorporated by the Baroque performer. Such things as the use of trills at cadence points and the adding of ornamental figuration on da capo repeats were taken for granted.

Our modern editions are full of edited pages. The urtext many times had only the bare structural notes and very few expression marks present so as to keep the melody apparent. This allowed the performer to rely less on the text and more on the style thereby permitting the interpretation to be flexible. An exception to this is found in J.S. Bach's urtexts which contain ornaments that have been written out. Many performers did not follow his suggestions, including Bach. He made his own alterations each time he performed his music so as to remain in the Baroque tradition of spontaneity in performance. Donington instructs us to be our own editors; each edition is simply one man's interpretation.

According to Donington there exist five principles of Baroque embellishment: the principles of necessity, economy, uniformity, variety, and suitability. The principle of necessity: Embellishments are obligatory. They are a necessity not a luxury. The principle of economy: One must choose the correct ornament in its proper context. Too much embellishment will only obscure the melody. The French incorporated many ornaments into the music; thus, there is less need for additional ornamentation. The Italians on the other hand incorporated very few embellishments in their music. Leopold Mozart advises us against adding too much embellishment to an ensemble piece of two or more instruments playing one melody line; we should perform the work exactly as the

composer has written it. Donington suggests that one first study the techniques of ornamentation in French music before attempting to play Italian music. The important thing to remember is that sufficiency of ornaments in one context may be excessive in a second context and deficient in a third. The principle of uniformity: Quantz states that imitative passages and entries that are closely connected should carry the same embellishments. Other ornaments may be substituted as the piece proceeds as long as a reasonable congruity is maintained. He warns us against confusing sequences with imitative passages. One should avoid repetition of embellishments for sequences or else the result is monotony. J.S. Bach will at times indicate different signs for subsequent imitative passages. This is his customary casualness in the use of contradictory and inconsistent signs that many of his contemporaries also employed. Unfortunately for us the Baroque composer trusted the performer to properly interpret his works. The principle of variety: Uniformity and variety go hand in hand. In a strict fugue there must be uniformity in ornamentation. However, in free imitation if the first entry is not embellished the following one is also not embellished. If the entries appear later in the work, embellishment is to be employed for variety. If there is no imitation the performer has greater flexibility; yet, one must never break the continuity, and each new embellishment employed must bear an obvious relationship to the embellishment that preceded it. C.P.E. Bach advocated ornamenting da capo sections of allegro tempos, but he felt that it was much abused. If everything is varied in the da capo section then the piece takes on an entirely different character. Donington states that where the principles of uniformity and variety conflict one should give weight to uniformity. The principle of suitability: The presence of a sign calling for an ornament indicates neither that the performer is obliged to introduce one nor does it prevent him from using another ornament. The absence of a sign for an ornament does not prevent one from being added but does

not excuse the performer from an obligatory one. Signs are guidelines; however, one must ultimately guided by taste, context, and suitability since different ornaments can have different effects on raw material. How do we recognize suitability? The situation where we have no choice are cadential trills. Suitability in flexible situations is difficult to prescribe. Donington tells us to generally use short appoggiaturas with short notes and long appoggiaturas with long notes. C.P.E. Bach has laid down for us some guidelines. He states that it is necessary to determine the harmonic content of compositions so that ornaments may be properly executed.

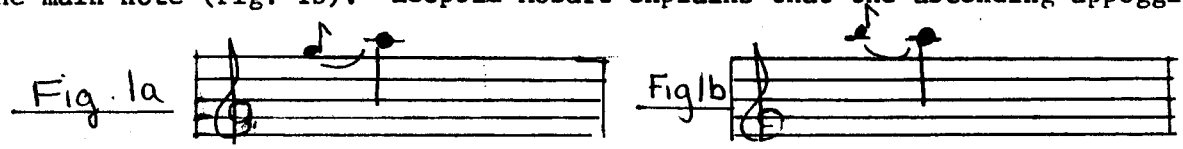
All ornaments bear a proportionate relationship to the length of the main note and the tempo and expression of the music. The more notes contained in an ornament the longer the main note must be whether the length of the main note is determined by the tempo or by the length of the main note itself. He cautions us against hurried executions which cause a blurring of the melody and against prolonged executions which ruin the brillance of an ornament. Ornaments bring out tenderness, sadness, or gaiety in music. Brillant embellishments would certainly be inappropriate for a tender passage. Ornaments generally adapt themselves to the key signatures. There seems to be no rule as to when to use chromatic and diatonic ornaments. C.P.E. Bach advises us to let our ear be the ultimate judge in this respect.

There are three functions of ornaments: first, to join and enliven notes (melodic ornaments); second, to emphasize and accentuate notes (rhythmic ornaments); and third, to increase expressiveness (harmonic ornaments). Melodic ornaments are inclined to be smooth; seldom are they conspicuously accented. They occur on or between the beat and have various lengths. Rhythmic ornaments are explosive, conspicuously accented, and on the beat. The short appoggiatura, double disjunct appoggiatura, and slide serve a rhythmic function. Harmonic ornaments are expressively overshadowing, delay the main note, are stressed and

accented, are not explosive, and are on the beat. The long appoggiatura serves a harmonic function.

Appoggiaturas make transitions from one note to another. Quantz feels that a melody without an appoggiatura would "often sound very meager and plain".[2] The ear wearies of persistent consonances and longs for dissonance. According to Quantz this is the function of an appoggiatura. Donington refers to them as leaning notes and states that all appoggiaturas are played accented and on the beat therefore robbing the main note of a portion of its value. Ornaments that are performed off the beat (i.e., take their value from the preceding note) are not true appoggiaturas. He justifies his statement by explaining that appoggiaturas serve as discords, and in order for them to sound as such they must be struck on the beat. In this way they fulfill a harmonic function as well as a melodic function. Quantz explains that a brief silence before the appoggiatura is often expressive especially if the two notes are the same pitch. The appoggiatura should be louder than the main note to which it resolves and should be smoothly slurred to the main note. If time permits a swell in intensity is advised.

There exist ascending appoggiaturas which begin on the note below the main note (Fig. 1a) and descending appoggiaturas that begin on the note above the main note (Fig. 1b). Leopold Mozart explains that the ascending appoggiatura



is not as natural as the descending. If an ascending appoggiatura is desired it is better for it to be a half-step rather than a whole-step below the main note (Fig. 2a). It may be a very effective ornament if used before a concluding note (Fig. 2b). Ascending or descending appoggiatura by leap are rare, but

they do occur. They are treated like the stepwise appoggiatura. Usually the appoggiatura that proceeds by a leap is a note of retardation (i.e., the appoggiatura is a repeat of the note prior to the main note; Fig. 2c). The ascending form died out by about]750; therefore, it came to be accepted that all dissonances resolved downwards.

Fig. 2a

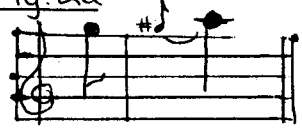


Fig. 2b

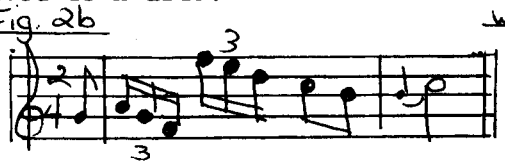
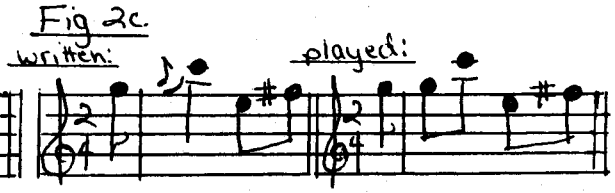


Fig 2c.



Appoggiaturas are also classified according to their length: short (unvarying appoggiatura) and long (varying appoggiatura).

The short appoggiatura was very popular prior to the eighteenth century. They are always played as quickly as possible (hence the name unvarying appoggiatura) and occur on the beat. C.P.E. Bach instructs us to play the short appoggiatura so fast that the ensuing note loses scarcely any of its length. He suggests using short appoggiaturas before short notes, before long notes when the main note is repeated several times (Fig. 3a), and before syncopated notes (Fig. 3b).

Fig. 3a

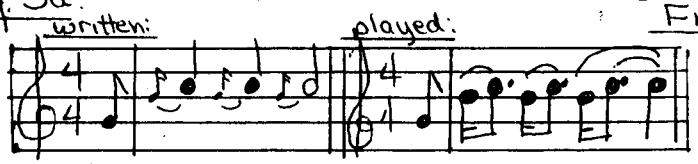
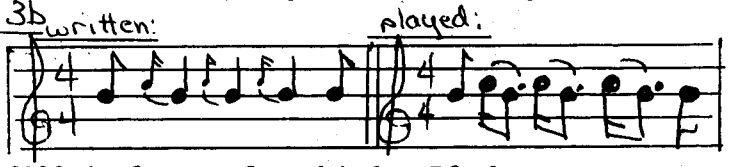


Fig. 3b



Short appoggiaturas may also be used to fill in leaps of a third. If the movement is an <u>allegro</u> the appoggiatura are notated and performed as seen in Fig. 4a, and if they occur in an <u>adagio</u> they are performed as demonstrated in Fig. 4b. Quantz and Mozart disagree with C.P.E. Bach and state that this filling in leaps of a third that occurs on weak beats is reserved for the passing appoggiatura which, according to them, occurs before the beat and serves a melodic function. Quantz and Mozart would have played Fig. 4a before the beat as illustrated in Fig. 4c. Another example of this passing appoggiatura can be seen in Fig. 5a.

Fig 4a

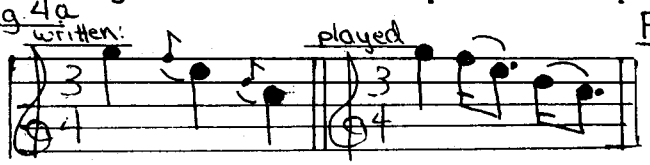


Fig. 4b

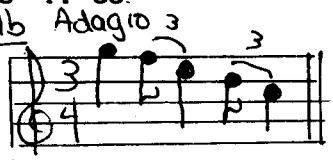
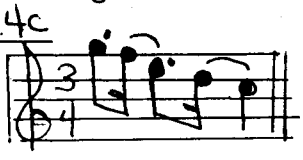


Fig. 4c



Quantz performed the appoggiatura quickly, unstressed, and before the beat.

According to C.P.E. Bach the figure should be played as illustrated in Fig. 5b.

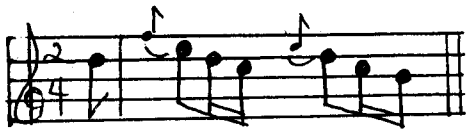
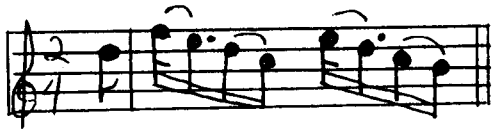
Fig 5a 

Fig 5b 

Mozart explains that passing appoggiaturas can be used with notes ascending or descending by conjunct (stepwise) degrees as in **Fig.** 6a. This figure is played unstressed and before the beat as illustrated in Fig. 6b. Donington tells us

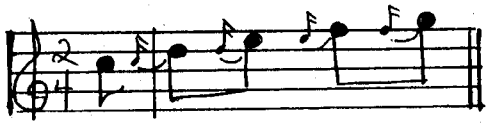
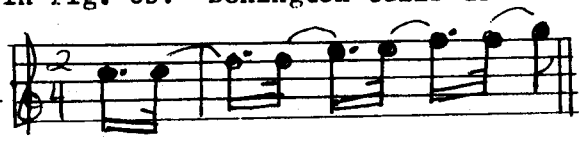
Fig. 6a 

Fig. 6b 

that the passing appoggiatura is not a true appoggiatura. The Germans in 1750 referred to this ornament as an appoggiatura which seems to flout all normal expectations of an appoggiatura by its use before the beat; therefore, Donington says that we must accept it as a "genuine...unparalled exception to the one rule which all Baroque authorities elsewhere took pains to impress upon us as quite invariable."[3] In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries the short appoggiatura came to be regarded as being before the beat. This is definately erroneous in terms of the Baroque tradition. We know from the complaints of C.P.E. Bach that a small minority favored or unintentionally fell into this practice during the Baroque period. Nevertheless, we must regard as standard all appoggiaturas as being on the beat.

Long or varying appoggiaturas became popular by the 1700's. They are like the short appoggiaturas in that they too fall on the beat. The difference in the two is in the length. The duration varies according to the length of the note to follow (hence the name varying appoggiatura). Quantz and C.P.E. Bach wrote that this ornament whether ascending or descending takes one-half of the time of the following note (Fig. 7a) and two-thirds of the time if the main note is dotted (Fig. 7b). In tied figures, it takes

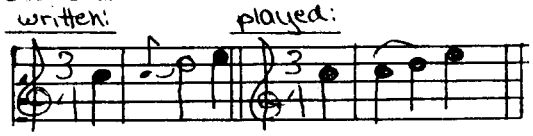
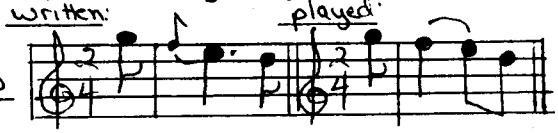
Fig. 7a 

Fig. 7b 

up the time of the first tied note (Fig. 8). When the note is followed by a rest, the appoggiatura takes up the full value of the note, and the main note is played in the time of the rest (Fig. 9) unless the performer needs time to breathe or if in an ensemble a moving passage in another voice occurs during the rest.

Fig. 8 written: played:

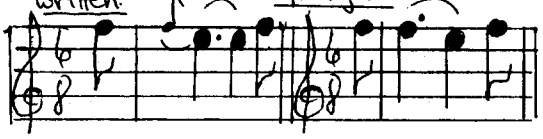
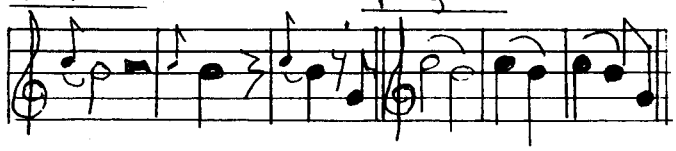


Fig. 9 written: played:



Marpurg tried to show in his treatise on clavier playing the exact lengths of appoggiaturas in his notation. However, Quantz states that appoggiaturas are written as small notes before the main note. It does not matter whether quarter, eighth, or sixteenth notes are used; although, it is customary to use eighth and sixteenth notes only before notes in which an appoggiatura is to be played very short. By the middle of the nineteenth century, long appoggiaturas were written into the melody as ordinary notes, and short appoggiaturas appeared as grace notes with a stroke in the tail. This innovation, like so many others, failed to gain acceptance; therefore, we can not rely upon it. It was not a Baroque convention and merely indicates an editors opinion which may be ill-founded. The length of an appoggiatura must be determined by context, rule, and musicianship and never by appearance. Only a few Baroque musicians attempted to indicate the length of an appoggiatura in notation. The rules of Quantz and C.P.E. Bach remain our best guide; but, their treatment of the appoggiatura was partly novel and must be applied with caution to J.S. Bach or Handel.

How can we be sure when a short appoggiatura is appropriate since the notation for a long, short, and passing appoggiaturas is the same? Recall that Quantz instructs us to use short appoggiaturas with short notes. Donington suggests that one use a long appoggiatura first according to Quantz and C.P.E. Bach's rules for length, and if it detracts from the harmony

then use a short appoggiatura. If neither seem to fit then try a passing appoggiatura.

Mozart discusses three varieties of appoggiaturas that appear less often in Baroque music. The Ueberwurf is a note which is slurred quietly on to the note preceding the appoggiatura and is always made upwards; it is used to make a note livelier. The Ruckfall or Abfall fall to the note next to the appoggiatura (Fig. 11a) or to the appoggiatura itself (Fig. 11b).

Fig. 11a

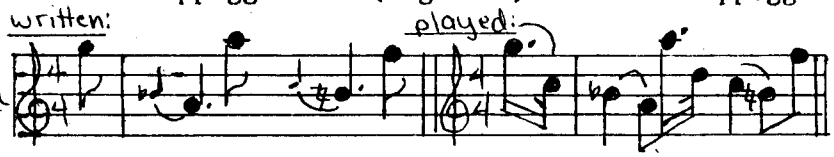
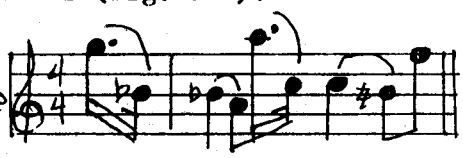


Fig. 11b



This occurs when the note standing immediately before the appoggiatura is so remote that an embellishment is needed to make the figure hang together better or to make it more lively. The Doppelschlag is an embellishment of four rapid, little notes which occur between the ascending appoggiatura and the note following it and which are attached to the appoggiatura. The accent falls on the appoggiatura and is slurred to the main note. On the turn the tone diminishes and the main note is played very softly (Fig. 12). The Halftriller is exactly the same in appearance as the Doppelschlag except that it is inverted (Fig. 13). The Nachschlage consists of a couple of

Fig. 12

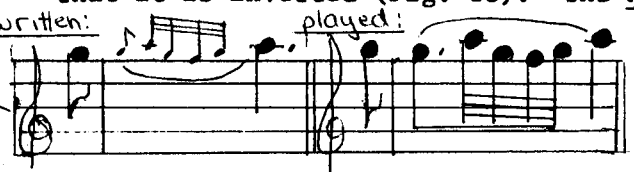
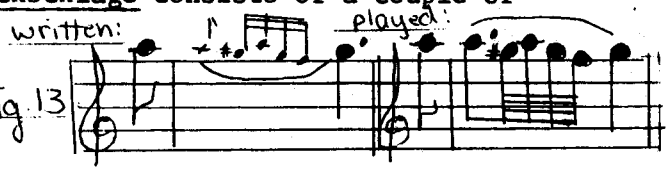
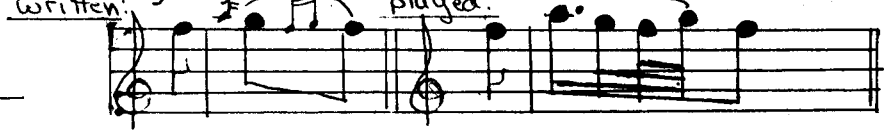


Fig. 13



rapid, little notes which hang onto the main note to enliven the performance of slow pieces. They, too, diminish in tone and are slurred (Fig. 14). The

Fig. 14



disjunct (leapwise) double appoggiatura consists of two preparatory notes to the main note and serves a rhythmic function. C.P.E. Bach discusses the three forms of this double appoggiatura; first, it may consist of the note below and the note above the main note and may be dotted in slow tempos (Fig. 15a);

second, the note before the main note is repeated and followed by the note above the main note (Fig. 15b); and third, it may occur in a free form.

Fig. 15a

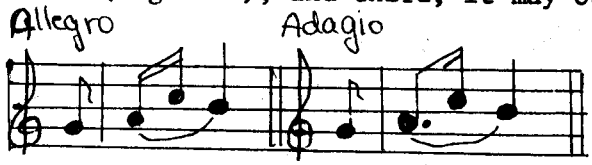
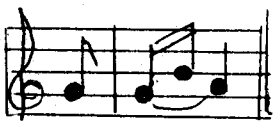
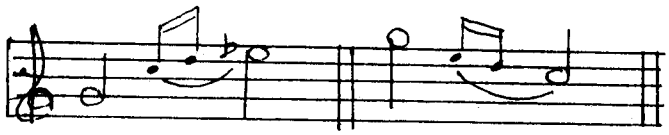


Fig. 15b



These accessory notes are softer than the main note and are slurred to the main note. The principal note gives as much of its length as is necessary to the ornament. The conjunct double appoggiatura or slide consists of two stepwise preparatory notes that are slurred to the main note and serves a rhythmic function. They appear in ascending and descending form; however, the ascending is more popular (Fig. 16). They, too, may be dotted for slower tempos.

Fig. 16



The acciaccatura is predominantly a keyboard ornament. It is an ascending note that is a half step below the main note. C.P.E. Bach played it on the beat, slurred it to the main note, and played it very suddenly. The discord is played simultaneously with the rest of the chord. There is no sign for it, but usually appears as an extraneous note within the chord.

A trill is a free, rapid, and slurred alternation of the main note with an upper auxiliary note a tone or semitone above it and is most necessary in Baroque music. Cadences are incomplete without a trill. Donington describes it this way: "Cadences are an inescapable feature of Baroque style, and rather than trying to escape them it is better to carry them off with conviction...." [4] The cadential trill must be recognized as necessary whether any sign or other hint is present in the notation. He instructs us to start the trill with its upper note on the beat, accenting and prolonging this note with great emphasis; the entire stress should go to it. In this

way the trill serves a harmonic function as in a cadential trill. Baroque musicians referred to this as a "prepared" trill. The trill was called "unprepared" if the upper note was not especially prolonged. In this way it served a melodic function.

The speed and number of repercussions in a trill are variable and unmeasured. Couperin states that trills are to be begun more slowly than they finish. This, however, is a minority opinion. Most experts on Baroque music agree with Quantz who says, "for trills to be perfectly beautiful, they must be made...of regular speed and one kept to the same rapidity.... There is no need to make all trills with the same speed....In sad pieces the trills are made more slowly; but in gay pieces they ought to be made more quickly."[5] He continues by stating that the speed and regularity of a trill depend on taste and context.

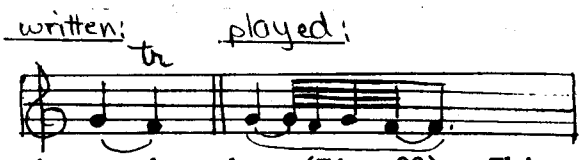
It has been erroneously believed in modern times that a Baroque trill preceded by a note which is the same note as the upper auxiliary is an exception to the normal rule and should begin on its main note. The upper auxiliary, as usual, begins the trill and does so either by repeating the note before the trill or by being tied to it. The choice between the two depends on taste and context.

There were two standard terminations of a trill: a) a note of anticipation and b) a turned ending (by lower auxiliary below the main note). The note of anticipation may be either detached or slurred according to the context (Fig. 17). C.P.E. Bach instructs us to slur the ending to the trill and to play it as quickly as the trill itself (Fig. 18). The choice of

ending, if not indicated in the music, is at the performer's discretion. However, one or the other is obligatory on full trills.

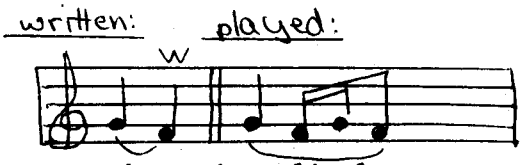
The half-trill consists of two repercussions (four notes, starting with the appoggiatura and ending with the main note which is held). The upper auxiliary is on the beat and not substantially prolonged. No ending is required. The function of the half-trill is primarily rhythmic; however, it is to some extent melodic. It occurs most often in passages descending by step (Fig. 19). At a rapid speed this half-trill can not be

Fig. 19



executed and becomes an inverted mordent (Fig. 20). This on-the-beat ornament starts with the main note and requires little accent and no prolongation. A slight unintentional anticipation often occurs at speed which weakens the effect and therefore should be avoided.

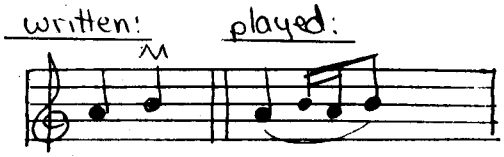
Fig. 20



A continued series of trills on a succession of short notes are for brillance only. They begin on the beat, starting with the upper auxiliary, are very brief and rapid, and require no ending.

The mordent is a rapid and free alteration of the main note with a lower auxiliary note a tone or semitone below it (Fig. 21). Since the standard mordent has primarily a rhythmic function, it is an on-the-beat ornament starting on the main note and slightly accented. The single mordent has only one repercussion; the double mordent has two repercussions. A continued mordent may have any number of repercussions, lasting up to

Fig. 21



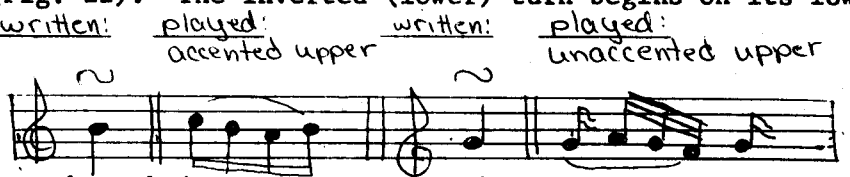
several bars. The longer the mordent, the less it keeps it rhythmic function and the more its function becomes merely that of coloring or sustaining the tone. The mordent may be taken either diatonically or chromatically. C.P.E. Bach explains that the "mordent adapts itself to its [tonal] context in the same way as the trill. [Nevertheless,] its brillance is frequently enhanced by [chromatically] raising its lower [auxiliary] note." [6]

There is also an inverted mordent, alternating with an upper instead of with a lower auxiliary note (see Fig. 20). This ornament was common in the Renaissance and early Baroque periods, was out of fashion in the main Baroque period, and came into fashion again about the middle of the eighteenth century.

"The mordent is particularly effective in an ascent by step or by leap...never on descending steps of a second," states C.P.E. Bach. [7] He explains further that "mordents, especially short ones, lend brillance to leaping, detached notes." [8]

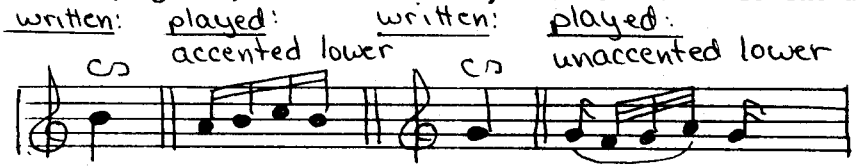
The turn is a circling around a main note by upper and lower auxiliary notes a tone or semitone away. It may be accented and on the beat (melodic/harmonic function) or it may be unaccented and off the beat (melodic function). The standard (upper) turn begins on the upper auxiliary, passes through its main note, touches the lower auxiliary and returns to the main note (Fig. 22). The inverted (lower) turn begins on its lower auxi-

Fig. 22



liary, passes through its main note, touches its upper auxiliary, and returns to its main note (Fig. 23). The standard, accented turn is the most usual

Fig. 23



throughout the Baroque period. A slur if not written is implied over the entire ornament, including the main note. The rhythm of

the turn is most commonly equal; however, it also occurs in a variety of unequal rhythms which include dotted and triplet rhythms. Rapid turns are usually taken in an equal rhythm so as to avoid a jerky effect.

Musicianship is the necessary judge of tempo since time words are quite misleading. "There are many cases where [time words] cannot be used for guidance, and where it is necessary to divine the intention of the composer more from the content of the piece than from the word which is found at the head to indicate its movement," states Quantz.[9] Donington suggests that we should let the music suggest its own tempo even if this appears to be contradicted by the time word.

The mood rather than the tempo of a piece is often suggested by the time words: allegro (cheerful); andante (fluently); adagio (gently); largo (broad); grave (heavy). C.P.E. Bach explains that, "the tempo of a piece... is derived from its general mood together with the fastest notes and passages which it includes. Proper attention to these considerations will prevent an allegro from being hurried and an adagio from being dragged."[10] It is possible to perform tempos on the fast side thus making the performance full of brillance and to perform tempos on the slow side to make the performance intense. Donington, however, suggests that it is best in Baroque music to take the fast movements slower than you think and slow movements faster than you think.

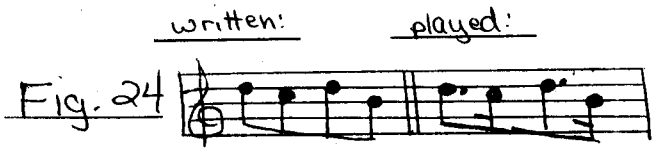
Tempos may be judged to some extent on dancing speeds. Dances frequently have only one tempo at which they can be danced successfully. Therefore, one must take into consideration the dance steps involved to properly execute the music. However, it must be remembered that the same dance may have very different characteristics and tempos at different periods and places.

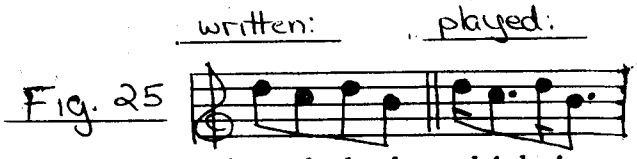
The tempo never remains constant throughout any ordinary movement. It may fluctuate from almost imperceptible to very conspicuous. Thomas Mace, in his treatise Musick's Monument, states, " [Beginners must learn strict time: but] when we come to be Masters so that we can command all manner of Time, at our own pleasures; we then take Liberty (and very often, for Humour [i.e., mood], and good Adornment-sake in certain Places) to Break Time; sometimes Faster, and sometimes Slower, as we perceive, the Nature of the Thing Requires." [11] Donington states that "most slow movements, and some fast movements, require plenty of stretching wherever the melodic line can gain expressiveness by doing this, or some increased tension of the harmony needs a little additional breadth to make its proper effect." [12] This is referred to as stolen time. Stolen time only momentarily disrupts the regularity of the underlying beat. Donington stresses that this flexibility of tempo is most appropriate to the Baroque style.

Rallentandos are an example of stolen time. Cadences are quite numberous in Baroque music and should be acknowledged by a rallentando. However, distinctions must be made between cadences which merely pass on at once from cadences that bring a portion of the music to a close; the latter should receive more emphasis. Girolamo Frescobaldi states that, "the closes, though notated as rapid (i.e., lack of a sign), need to be played in a very broad manner; and the nearer you come to the conclusion of the passage or close, the more you should hold back." [13] Donington advises us to avoid numerous and exaggerated rallentandos. He says that "too little [use of rallentando] sounds unfeeling; too much sounds shapeless. Just right does not sound noticeable at all, but...merely natural." [14] "In general, rallentandos are better suited to slow or comparatively moderate tempos than to rapid ones," states C.P.E.Bach. [15] The proper moment is often suggested by the harmony, but chiefly it is a sensitive response to hints offered by the music.

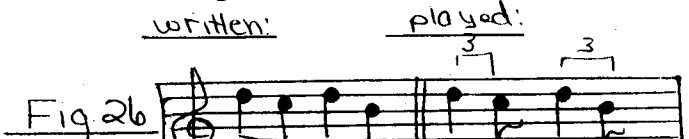
Certain rhythmic alterations were practiced in Baroque music. These alterations were not shown in the notation; therefore, they were left to the performer. This is in keeping with other Baroque conventions of ornamentation and tempo; nothing in the music was made rigid which could be left spontaneous.

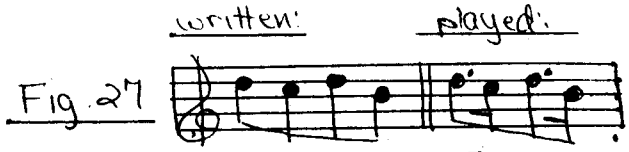
Among these liberties taken for granted by performers was the right to modify a rhythm by performing certain equally notated notes unequally. This is referred to as inequality and is performed most often by lengthening the first note and shortening the second note, this being referred to as standard inequality (Fig. 24). For a more striking effect, one would shorten the first note and lengthen the second, this being known as reversed inequality (Fig. 25). A variety of rhythms can be performed such as a triplet rhythm,





which is called lilting inequality (Fig. 26).and as a dotted rhythm, which is called vigorous inequality (Fig. 27). The inequality is not precisely measured



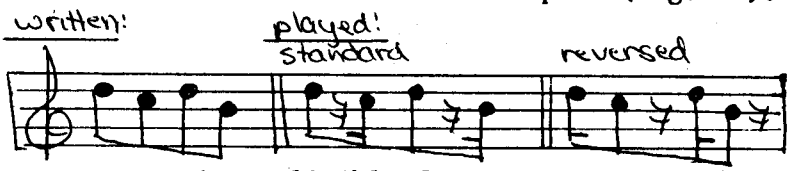


but is proportioned expressively at the discretion of the performer. For lilting inequality, notes should fall naturally into pairs, be mainly stepwise, be the shortest notes in substantial numbers in a passage, be of moderate speed, and be graceful rather than energetic in character. Lilting inequality should be slurred by pairs, even if not indicated by the notation. This type of inequality gives a sighing effect when the first note is stressed and the second note is allowed to die away. A slight separation between each pair

of notes is required.

Vigorous inequality requires that the notes fall naturally into pairs, be neither very fast nor very slow, and be energetic rather than graceful in character. This form of inequality need not be slurred either in the notation or in the performance. No special stress on the first note nor dying away on the second note is required. A crisp effect can be attained with vigorous standard inequality by making a marked separation between each note of a pair but none between each pair. For reversed inequality, this separation occurs between each pair but not between each note of a pair (Fig. 28). Predominately

Fig. 28



leapwise passages are sometimes eligible for vigorous inequality. However, one must guard against too jerky an effect. At rather high speeds, vigorous inequality can be exhilarating. However, in quick passages in a very quick movement, time may not permit the playing of notes unequally. Generally, inequality is reserved for the shortest notes in a piece of moderate speed.

Slurs over pairs of notes are an invitation to inequality. Slurs notated over more than two notes prevent pairing and therefore prevent inequality. Staccato signs, dashes, or dots over notes require the notes to be played equally.

In sequential passages and in imitations where inequality is used it is necessary to maintain this inequality throughout the matching phrases or entries and more or less in the same rhythm.

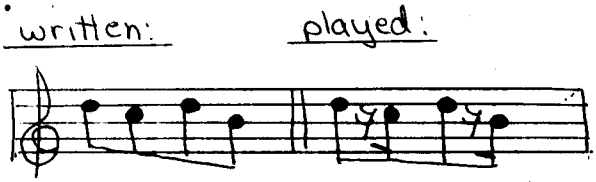
Another variety of rhythmic alterations in Baroque music is dotting. The dot in our present notation prolongs the value of the notes preceeding it by one half which is referred to as standard dotting. However, in Baroque notation it was used to mean any convenient prolonging of the note whether

by more than one half (over-dotting) or less than one half (under-dotting). Most dotted notes occur in the course of the melody and are of the standard length with only a slight flexibility for expression. However, if the dotted notes are persistent enough to dominate the rhythm, or form a distinct rhythmic figure, under-dotting or over-dotting is required.

Under-dotting is used in passages that are graceful in character and moderate in speed. It is musically identical to lilting inequality (approximately a triplet rhythm) thus requiring the same kind of slurring and phrasing. The standard direction, the first note of each pair being dotted, is most common; however, the reverse direction, the second note of each pair being dotted, can be used but is quite rare since a lethargic effect often results.

Over-dotting is equivalent to vigorous inequality. A passage that sounds sluggish if taken literally can be made more crisp by lengthening the dot and very quickly passing over the second note. Slurring is possible; however, a more vigorous effect is attained by performing the dot as a rest (Fig 29). As with under-dotting, the standard direction and reversed direction are equally eligible for over-dotting; though, the standard direction is more common. A passage that is energetic in character and moderate in speed is a candidate for over-dotting.

Fig. 29



It is very necessary for a performer of Baroque music to make the separation between phrases clearly audible. More separation is necessary for phrasing within a larger unit such as a section. The time is either taken out of the last note of the phrase or is inserted as stolen time. Good phrasing also includes a stretching of the tempo within the phrase for

expression, a moulding of the dynamics to allow the sound to intensify at the peak of a phrase and then fall gradually to its conclusion, and an added intensity at the opening of a new phrase. As is characteristic of Baroque music, phrasing is left to the performer without any assistance from the notation.

All degrees of articulation are possible. However, more hints than instructions occur in the notation. Slurs are occasionally found but are inconsistent. The performer must work out consistent articulations. According to Quantz, "it should be said in passing, that if there are several figures of the same sort of notes in sequence and the first is marked with a slur, they must all be played in the same way until another kind of notes is met with. It is the same with notes above which there are dashes." [16] C.P.E. Bach states that, "in general, the liveliness of allegros is conveyed by detached notes, and the expressiveness of adagios by sustained, slurred notes...even when not so marked." [17] Slurs should be laid out very simply and symmetrically. Two notes slurred and two tongued are the most common. In a triplet figure all three notes may be slurred or two slurred and one tongued. However, within any pattern of articulation, a slight variation in the intensity and duration of notes is recommended to make the music continously interesting.

Contrast in dynamics is important to the performance of Baroque music. Besides the overall dynamic scheme which is often notated in the music, there must be a constant play of loud and soft to keep the interest in the music. Quantz sums it up by stating the following:

> Good expression ought nevertheless to be diversified. Light and shade must continually be kept up. For in truth you will never be touching if you render all the notes at the same strength or the same weakness, if you perform, so to speak, always in the same colour, and do not know how to bring out and hold back the sound at the right time. Thus it is necessary to introduce a continual interchange of loud and soft. [18]

Performers should guard against overdoing the liberties Baroque music allows. The following is Donington's summation of this idea:

> Too much of the fashionable inequality, over-dotting, and free ornamentation...can sound worse than too little.... The line comes first, and anything which disturbs a good sense of the line is quite certainly mistaken in performances of Baroque music....If it does not sound like good musicianship, it is not good musicianship. [19]

We can come close to authenticity in Baroque music if we approach it with good musicianship and the necessary information that books and recordings can give.

NOTES

[1] Robert Donington, A Performer's Guide to Baroque Music, (New York: Charles Scribners Sons, 1973), p. 20.

[2] J. J. Quantz, On Playing the Flute, (London: Faber & Faber, 1966), p.91 .

[3] Robert Donington, "Ornamentation," Vol. VI, 5th edition of Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians, ed. Eric Blom, (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1959), p. .

[4] Robert Donington, The Interpretation of Early Music, (New York: St. Martin's Press, Inc., 1959), p. 171.

[5] Donington, Performer's Guide, p. 200.

[6] Ibid., p. 203.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Donington, Interpretation, p. 197.

[9] Ibid., p. 317.

[10] Donington, Performers Guide, p.249.

[11] Donington, Interpretation, p. 366.

[12] Donington, Performer's Guide, p. 251.

[13] Donington, Interpretation, p. 367.

[14] Donington, Performer's Guide, p. 253.

[15] Donington, Interpretation, p. 368.

[16] Ibid., p. 409.

[17] Donington, Performer's Guide, p. 285.

[18] Donington, Interpretation, p. 423.

[19] Donington, Performer's Guide, p. 299.

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